



# GREAT START COLLABORATIVE OF KENT COUNTY

*Mission: To assure a coordinated system of community resources and supports to help all Kent County families provide a great start for their children from birth to age five.*

## Minutes

**June 22, 2023 – 1:30pm-3:00pm**

Location: First CRC located at 651 MLK Jr. Street SE, 49507

Attendees: Kristin Gietzen, Jamal Dawson, Brittany Price, Betsy Zandstra, Susan Chang, Sharquilla Harris, Jennifer Cottingham, Dr. Ali Jaffry, Kevin Kammeraad, Ashley Karsten, Wali Thomas, Yolanda Johnson, Lesly Sis, Tara Gwamna, Jayme Vosovic, Kathryn Steiner, Pam Shoemaker, Sarah Miller, Stephanie McKendry, Bryanna Hopkins, Anastashia Flores, Traci Schenkel, Jaime Mueller, Allyssa Bryan

Staff: Paula Brown, Antoinette McCutchen, Shanequa Mosely, Tomarra Richardson

- Welcome **Kristin Gietzen**
  - Approval of minutes for April 27<sup>th</sup>
    - Accepted as submitted.
  
- DEI Activity **Antoinett McCutchen**
  - LINC-UP
  
- Great Start Parent Coalition Report **Tomarra Richardson**  
**Shanequa Mosley**
  - COFI Cohort III Group Project
    - BIPOC Mental Health Resource Fair, Coloring Book in the process
  - Books, Blocks & Balls
    - Please continue to share event on social media.
    - ASQ being administered.
  - Community Baby Shower
    - Please continue to share events on social media.
  - Diaper Drive Celebration
    - GR Children's Museum Friday June 23rd
  - Family Scavenger Hunt
    - Goosechase App
    - Kick Off Meeting
  - Parent Café
    - 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month @Neland CRC
  - New parent reps introduced.
  - Free Community Dinner July 13 @6:30pm Devos Place- Looking for volunteers as well.
  
- Legislative Update **Jayme Vosovic**
  - 45.1 million expansion for Special Ed
  - \$500,000 increase to School Breakfast Program
  - Removed 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading law to hold back children.
  - State level data
  - Policy advocacy at state level
  - Budget season is almost done, due date July 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - As soon as the current year budget is approved – the next budget plan is in action.



- Summer is a great time to have discussions with legislators as they are in their districts.
- Kids Count Data Book Release Date – August 2023
- The best way to advocate with legislators is to send a personal story. Personal stories have the greatest impact. An even stronger impact is to hand write the letter as opposed to sending an email. Also attend legislator coffee hours
- We need action! Advocate for the items that the senate and house have not approved.
- **Slides attached\*\***

- Child Care Report

- Vibrant Futures: Child Care Regional Planning
- Kent County 1.7 children per childcare spot (Childcare Desert)
- Main Root Cause- work force, zoning issues
- Will be doing surveys to stakeholders (employees, parents, and childcare workers)
- Village Care Employer Survey
- Family and Child Care Surveys
- Distribution start July 10<sup>th</sup>
- Monetary incentives to organizations that distribute the surveys. Would like at least 30 surveys per organization/parent.
- Goal of receiving 1,000 surveys
- Looking for parent social influencers with children under 13
- Parents/Partners will be entered into drawing- about \$2,000 worth of prizes to distribute including televisions, bikes, gift cards and more.
- 
- Great Start to Quality: New Website

**Chana Edmond-Verley**

**Annastashia Flores**

- New website: Greatstartoquality.org

- Statewide website

- GSQ Two Important Objectives:

- Free Support for licensed childcare providers & support license exempt providers as well (grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.)
- Support parents utilizing the website and connecting to quality programs based on their needs and location.
- If you can't find a provider in the GSQ system that means that they are not licensed. All licensed providers are included on the GSQ website.

- GSC Updates

**Paula Brown**

- Strategic Plan
  - Reflecting on the purpose of the 'why' we are doing what we are we doing with the GSC?
    - Where do (YOU) GSC members/organizations see themselves partnering to move work forward?
  - Viewed video: Michael Smith Jr. Know Your Why  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ytFB8TrkTo>
  - Survey monkey to follow with strategies and plans as a collaborative.

- Partner Announcements

- KDL – Summer reading programs, get a log and get a prize once you turn it in
  - Can overlap with GRPL.
- GRPL – Summer reading programs, get a log and get a prize once you turn it in



- Parent Reps – Poetry Slam @4pm today
  - Fredrick/ELNC/ - Equity Summit at Leonard location 10am-2pm
- Healthy Homes Coalition – Get ahead of Lead is a new initiative for families to pick up a filter from distribution sites. [www.gettingaheadoflead.com](http://www.gettingaheadoflead.com)
- Diaper Drive celebration tomorrow @GRCM
  - Diaper pantry link – update coming soon.
- Meeting adjourned 3:07pm

**Upcoming Meetings:**

**GSC Executive Team: July 11th, 2:30pm-4pm (Zoom)**

**August 8th, 2:30pm-4pm (Zoom)**

**Social Emotional Health: August 9th, 10:30-11:30am (Zoom)**

**School Readiness Advisory: August 10th, 9:00-10:30 am - (In person: Health Dept)**

**GSC Membership Meeting: August 24th, 1:30–3:00pm (In person: Health Dept)**